

blockage at the heart of justice, blocking the flow of reason, of common sense, fairness, and urgently needed progress.

But the pain and frustration I might feel is minimal compared to those who are suffering under the brunt of a broken system. We cannot be deaf to the cries for justice of families and children, those suffering addictions, those suffering from mental illness, and those whose families have been torn apart by such misfortunes. We cannot be mute or silent in the face of injustice, those of us who are elected to serve all Americans.

At the beginning of each day, we swear an oath in this body. We pledge allegiance to those ideals of liberty and justice. Let us now act so we do not betray the moral standing of our Nation.

I urge the Senate leadership to bring the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act for a vote. The time is right now to do what is right now.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the Reed amendment No. 4549.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Reed amendment No. 4549 to the McCain amendment No. 4229 to S. 2943, the National Defense Authorization Act.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Richard J. Durbin, Michael F. Bennet, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Jeanne Shaheen, Al Franken, Gary C. Peters, Bill Nelson, Barbara Boxer, Robert Menendez, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Barbara A. Mikulski.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the McCain amendment No. 4229.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the McCain amendment No. 4229 to S. 2943, an act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

John McCain, John Cornyn, Marco Rubio, Roger F. Wicker, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, Pat Roberts, Tom Cotton, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt, Shelley Moore Capito, Dan Sullivan, Lindsey Graham, Lisa Murkowski, David Vitter, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the man-

datory quorum calls with respect to the cloture motions be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, or ROTC, the Nation's training program for commissioned officers of the U.S. Armed Forces. Founded in 1916, ROTC prepares young adults to be leaders in our Nation's Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. ROTC cadets commit to serving their country in uniform after college graduation in exchange for ROTC assisting with costs associated with their college education.

Although military training took place at civilian colleges and universities in the 19th century, it was not until the National Defense Act of 1916, signed by President Woodrow Wilson, that this training was consolidated under a single entity: the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. ROTC is the largest officer-producing organization within the U.S. military.

In 100 years of history, ROTC has commissioned more than 1 million military officers. The U.S. Army ROTC program started in 1916 with just 46 initial programs, and today it has commissioned more than 600,000 officers at almost 1,000 schools across the Nation, with a presence in every State, as well as Guam and Puerto Rico.

In 2016, Army ROTC has an enrollment of more than 30,000 and produces over 70 percent of the second lieutenants who join the Army, Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve.

Army ROTC is one of the most demanding and strenuous leadership training programs a young person can choose today. ROTC training molded and shaped six Chiefs of Staff of the Army, two Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a current Supreme Court Justice, the current Governor of Kentucky, as well as countless other leaders in government, business, science, sports, and the arts.

For decades, Army ROTC has conducted summer training for many cadets at Fort Knox, KY. In 2013, I was pleased to help Army ROTC get an ROTC training program called the Cadet Leader Course relocated to Fort Knox as well. More than 6,000 cadets attend that particular leadership course at Fort Knox every year since the installation began hosting the program in 2014. In all, over 10,000 cadets attend various summer training courses each year at Fort Knox.

ROTC serves as a vital introduction to life and a career in the military for America's young men and women. Supporting our Armed Forces means supporting ROTC programs at institutions across the country. ROTC creates America's next generation of leaders, in the Armed Forces, and in American life.

I know my colleagues join me in commemorating the 100th anniversary of the creation of our military's ROTC and in thanking the hundreds of thousands of brave cadets who have successfully completed the challenges of the program and gone on to become officers. We are certainly grateful for their service and their sacrifice. Without ROTC, our Nation's military would not be the superior fighting force that is today. I am proud that Kentucky plays a significant role in the training of ROTC cadets.

FRANK R. LAUTENBERG CHEMICAL SAFETY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate's final passage today of the bipartisan Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, after 3 years of difficult negotiations, reflects the true nature of compromise. I am glad that we have finally come to an agreement to update our country's ineffective and outdated chemical regulatory program. While this is not a perfect bill, I believe that it goes a long way towards protecting American families from dangerous chemicals and serves as a fitting tribute to Senator Lautenberg, who was a tireless public health advocate.

This legislation overhauls the 40-year-old, outdated Toxic Substances Control Act and will bring more than 64,000 chemicals under the review of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA. Under the old law, the EPA was required to approve chemicals using a burdensome and ineffective economic cost-benefit analysis, but this reform bill will require the EPA to make a decision based solely on health and safety concerns. Additionally, the Lautenberg act gives the EPA enhanced authority to require testing of both new and existing chemicals, requiring safety reviews for all chemicals in active commerce and a safety finding for new chemicals before they are allowed on the market.

The House bill originally included a provision preempting State authority to regulate specific chemicals. State preemption is a significant concern for Vermont, especially with the discovery of perfluorooctanoic acid, PFOA, contaminated water in the communities of North Bennington and Pownal. Unfortunately, due to shortcomings in the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act, PFOA was one of many chemicals that had been presumed safe without any requirement for testing or review. While

the inclusion of even minimal State preemption action in the final bill is unfortunate, the final compromise largely retains the Senate bill's provisions and allows States 12 to 18 months to enact tougher regulations through a waiver process after the EPA formally announces that it has started the review process for a chemical. There have been assurances to the Vermont congressional delegation from the EPA that Vermont will be able to retain its more stringent regulation of PFOA. I will continue to work with both the State and with the EPA to address PFOA contamination in Vermont.

I am pleased that the final bill includes two mercury-specific provisions: The creation of a mercury inventory and the expansion of the export ban to certain mercury compounds. These provisions are sections of the Mercury Use Reduction Act that I was proud to cosponsor in the 112th Congress. Under the mercury inventory provision, the EPA will be required to prepare an inventory of mercury supply, use, and trade in the United States every 3 years. This data will enhance our ability to reduce the health risks from mercury exposure. The second mercury provision builds upon the Mercury Export Ban Act of 2008, expanding the export ban currently in effect for elemental mercury to include certain mercury compounds that could be traded to produce elemental mercury in commercial quantities, thus undermining the existing export ban.

This reform bill also includes new unprecedented transparency measures thanks to new limits imposed on what can qualify as "confidential business information." The transparency provisions also ensure that State officials, medical professionals, and the public have access to health and safety information. In addition, the bill places time limits and requires justification for any "confidential business information" claims that must also be fully justified when made and will expire after 10 years if they are not re-substantiated.

Like many Vermonters, I have been concerned for years about the need to improve chemical safety standards in the United States. While I had hope for more reforms in the bill, overall, the bill is a significant improvement over current law. It is a true testament to the groundwork laid by Senator Lautenberg that we have finally heeded the calls from the American people to reform this outdated law and better protect our families from dangerous chemicals.

TRIBUTE TO DR. FREDERICK BURKLE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, one of the formative parts of my life was being a student at Saint Michael's College in Vermont. It was especially so because of the people I met there. One of my most memorable classmates is Dr. Frederick Burkle.

Skip Burkle was one who cared greatly about what he was learning and showed moral leadership even then. As students, we both lived in dorms that resembled World War II-era barracks. Fortunately, the living conditions for students at Saint Michael's have improved since then.

Last month, now-Dr. Burkle, spoke at Saint Michael's College giving the commencement address. Everyone who was there actually listened to a man who spoke of his own background. He spoke also to the moral compass he has developed both in school and since in the military and in his scientific work.

So much could be said about his career. I agree when he said, "My humanitarian work was the most meaningful I've ever done." That makes so much sense because few people I have ever known have begun to approach his life as a humanitarian.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that his speech to the graduating class be printed in the RECORD because I want those beyond Saint Michael's College to read what an outstanding person has said.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

COLCHESTER, VERMONT: MAY 15, 2016
FREDERICK M. BURKLE, JR., MD, MPH
PHYSICIAN, SCHOLAR, HUMANITARIAN

Greetings to you all!

There are many reasons to celebrate this day. This graduation is a milestone for you and your entire family.

Saint Michael's also needs to be celebrated and commended. As an academic, I do not know of any other college or university this year, or in recent memory, that has shown both the insight and courage to declare "Service to Others" as the theme of graduation. Only at Saint Mikes! . . . I'm not surprised!

The implications of this decision are many and must be applauded . . . Most importantly it brings great hope and wisdom for the future of this generation and those that follow . . .

I have been asked to speak to you on what in my life and college experiences influenced my humanitarian career. My first concern when asked was: How does someone who graduated in 1961, 55 years ago, tell his story to the class of 2016? . . .

Let's give it a try

In truth, if you knew me in high school you would have voted me the "least likely graduate to ever give a commencement address." . . .

I attended an all male Catholic High School in Southern Connecticut. I was painfully shy, occasionally stuttered, was easily embarrassed, struggled to be an average student, and was hopelessly burdened by what is known today as severe dyslexia. I only began to read in the 5th grade.

My Father, emphatically and loudly said "No" to the idea of college. He had labeled me a "lazy dreamer" . . . so to him college was a waste of good money. You would agree . . . I was certainly not a prize academic prospect!

So here I am . . . and now I've got to explain to you how I got onto this stage as a Commencement speaker.

I would not be here today without the help of some very unselfish people . . . I call them

my own personal humanitarians . . . we all have them.

Not going to college was a serious blow I could not live with. For years I had held on to an otherwise quite impossible and secret dream of being a physician. A dream which simply arose many years before from viewing very early Life Magazine photos of doctors treating starving children in an African jungle hospital.

Having been born 2 years before WWII, all my life was one war after another with equally dire photos of both World War II and Korean War casualties. And soon after, during high school, emerged my generation's war . . . in a strange and unheard of country named Viet Nam . . . a war which actually began to build up as early as 1954.

My story, in great part, is a love story. I met an equally shy girl when she was 13 and I was the older man of 14. We went steady during high school and secretly dreamed of our future together. With College off the table the military draft seemed inevitable. She urged me to plead my case to the High School Academic Dean, a stern gray haired Brother of Holy Cross, to both loan me the application fee and forward a decent recommendation. I was shaking in my boots. He silently pondered the circumstances yet nodded his head and agreed to accept the personal risk despite the potential anger of my Father . . .

The very next day there was a check waiting for me!

There were others . . . while working as an orderly in a local hospital I met two very caring physicians. They embodied everything I wanted to be. They introduced me to a small French Catholic Liberal Arts College named St. Michaels in rural Vermont that I never heard of. Both were WWII veterans who attended St. Mike's and then medical school on the GI Bill. Despite their busy schedules they took time to counsel and encourage, spoke highly of the quality of the education but also cautioned that the academic experience would demand much more.

St. Mike's was the only place I applied. With luck, I was accepted. My girl friend's parents, not my own, took me to campus . . . There was no turning back!

Falling in love with St. Mike's was a little slower and not nearly as romantic! Matriculation at St. Mike's was a shock . . . and at first a disappointment. Maybe my Father was right . . . Will I fail and embarrass myself once again?

From the outset, the St. Mike's academic faculty made it clear that everyone on campus was required to take 4 years of liberal arts. This included a long list of the world's literature, history, arts and philosophy from the beginning of written time. This included a comparative study of all religions, and a compelling semester of logic that forced us to deliberate the philosophical "how" and "why" problems that stressed the minds of every adolescent, like me, whose brain had not yet matured . . .

It took me 3 trips to the bookstore to carry all the required reading back to the small shared room in a former WWII poorly heated wooden barracks that once stood where we are today.

We desperately asked why such torture was necessary. I'm to be a scientist. Why did I have to study the liberal arts? I pleaded . . . something must be wrong! With my reading disability, my anxiety level was palpable to everyone.

The science faculty made it quite clear that to pass the rigorous requirements for recommendation to graduate school required excellent marks in both the sciences and the liberal arts. They offered us multiple examples of notable Statesmen and Nobel Laureates alike who, empowered by incorporating